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FIGHTING BLACK MARKETS

Broadcast by E. J. Rowell, Food Distribution Administration in the Department of Agriculture's portion of the National Farm and Home Hour, Tuesday, April 27, 1943, over stations associated with the Blue Network.

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ROWELL: To help wipe out illegal traffic in meat, the Department of Agriculture sometime ago issued two orders covering the purchase and sale of livestock, and slaughter of livestock. The main purpose of these orders -- officially known as Food Distribution Orders numbers 26 and 27, is to see that livestock move to markets through regular commercial channels of distribution. Because that is the best way to be sure that our supplies of meat go where they are most needed.

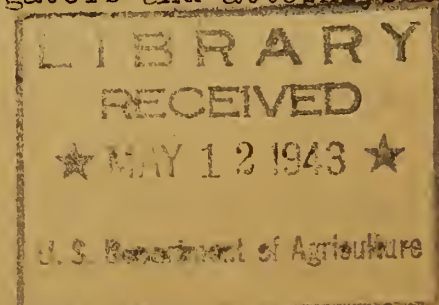
The order which covers the purchases and sales requires that everyone who buys livestock for resale within 30 days, or who buys or sells livestock on a commission basis, shall secure a permit to carry on such a business. There are other requirements. But if every farmer will keep records covering all sales, and if he will be certain that the man who buys his cattle, vealers, sheep, or hogs has a license, he will be helping in a big way to stamp out the illegal traffic in livestock and meat. This permit is one means toward the objective. Another means of accomplishing the objective is the slaughter permit order. This order requires that local slaughterers, butchers, and farmers who slaughter livestock for the sale of meat, secure a slaughter permit. Both kinds of permits -- the one for slaughter, and the one for buying and selling livestock -- may be obtained from County War Boards, and from offices of the Food Distribution Administration. The number or total weight of livestock which may be butchered under the slaughter permit depends on how much the man who received the permit slaughtered in 1941. The big, commercial meat packers are not allowed to slaughter and sell to civilians over 65 percent of the beef, and 75 percent of the pork sold to them in 1941. The local butchers -- those who slaughter under 300,000 pounds a year -- can sell civilians as much as they sold them two years ago.

Now that we have meat rationing, people are asking why the local slaughterers should be limited as to how much meat they can sell civilians. The answer is that just as much as possible of our total supply of each type of meat -- beef, veal, pork, and lamb -- must be allocated between the armed forces, civilians, and other war uses.

Too many retail butchers are killing and dressing more cattle because they have been unable to get enough beef from other sources to satisfy their customers. But every time a retail butcher kills an extra steer or cow, he draws off just that much meat from regular channels -- channels which supply our armed forces.

The number of animals received at the larger stockyards is not as many as it should be on the basis of known production. Illegal slaughter and sale of meat still exists. Arrests and convictions are increasing -- and will continue to increase. But it is impossible to have enough investigators and attorneys to catch and convict every violator.

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Too many animals killed outside of commercial channels means that it will be impossible to make the needed allotment of our meat supply. Here's why this plan of distribution is essential. First -- our soldiers and sailors want beef more than any other meat. And second -- right now, under price ceilings, the people at home want beef and more beef. They want so much beef that if not a pound of it went to an Army camp or a battle ship, there would not be enough beef to meet the demand.

Black markets can only be stamped out by active public support. Farmers and slaughterers will be doing their part if they live up to the regulations covering the two orders I've talked about today.

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